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Public Health Reports

Treasury Department, United States Marine-Hospital Service. Published in accordance with act of Congress approved February 15, 1893.

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UNITED STATES.

Amendments to quarantine regulations—Inspection of certain vessels and baggage on and after April 1 and until November 1.

[Circular No. —.]

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY,
Washington, D. C., February 3, 1898.

To officers of the Treasury Department, State and local quarantine officers, consular officers, and others concerned:

The following amendments to the Quarantine Regulations, to be observed at ports and on the frontiers of the United States, are hereby promulgated:

Article II, paragraph 2, exception 1, is amended to read as follows: Vessels arriving during certain seasons of the year, to wit, November 1 to April 1, may be admitted to entry.

Article II, paragraph 2, exception 2, is amended by striking out the words "May 1st" and inserting the words "April 1st" in lieu thereof.

L. J. GAGE,
Secretary.

[Reports to the Supervising Surgeon-General United States Marine-Hospital Service.]

Report on smallpox epidemic in Alabama.

BIRMINGHAM, ALA., *January 26, 1898.*

SIR: I have the honor to give a brief report of the operations of the Service in Jefferson County during the present smallpox outbreak, which lack of time has heretofore prevented.

On January 8 official notification was received by me of the acceptance, by the authorities of Birmingham and Jefferson county, of aid as tendered by yourself, and on the following morning work was commenced in this city with 30 inspectors.

Each inspector was assigned a certain territory varying in extent from four to eight blocks according to population, and was instructed to make a house-to-house canvas, entering in a notebook the address of each house visited, names of all inmates of each house, date of last vaccination of each individual, whether or not such vaccination was successful, and to revaccinate all persons who had not been successfully vaccinated within the last year as evidenced by an examination of the scar in each case. Each room in every house was to be visited, especially in the negro quarters where smallpox was most prevalent, and a thorough search of the premises made for cases that were being concealed.

As the principal method of the spread of the disease seemed to be through negro miners who constantly pass from one mining camp to another, and as these men usually object to vaccination and are not within reach of city ordinance, an attempt was made to secure cooperation of the mine owners and superintendents. A meeting was accordingly held on the morning of January 9 and another on the 10th instant.

These meetings were attended by men whose mines and furnaces support a population of about 40,000 persons and they agreed to assist me in every way possible.

Notices were immediately published and posted at each mine and furnace, signed by all the firms that had entered into the agreement, stating that no person would be employed who refused to have himself and family vaccinated.

Previous to this time an attempt had been made by superintendents of different companies to enforce vaccination, with the result that the men would leave in such numbers as to cause serious embarrassment from lack of laborers, and the attempt was discontinued; as soon as they learn, however, from these notices, that neighboring mines would not give them employment unless vaccinated, desertion almost entirely ceased, and my inspectors have met with but little opposition in their work. Operations having been satisfactorily begun in Birmingham, I visited as rapidly as possible the remaining infected points in Jefferson County, and inspectors were detailed to carry on the work at the following places, in the manner above indicated: Adamsville, Bessemer, Blue Creek (including Johns, Sumpter, and Adger), Brookside, Coalberg, Dolcita, Dolomite, East Lake, Ensley, Irondale, Ishkooda, Mary Lee, Oxmoor, Pratt City, Thomas, Woodlawn, Woodward, and Warrior; and also Talladega, in Talladega County.

A few other towns in Jefferson County will be worked in a short time. Seventy-one men are now employed here and in Talladega, and one house-to-house inspection of Birmingham, Bessemer, and Talladega will be completed to-morrow and another immediately begun.

Pesthouses have been established near Birmingham, Bessemer, and Talladega, and to these all cases from neighboring points are brought. At present they contain the following number of patients: Birmingham, 129; Bessemer, 75; Talladega, 39.

The amount of work done from January 9 to 26 by the inspecting corps will be seen from the following table:

	Number of houses inspected.	Number of persons inspected.	Number of persons vaccinated.	Number of cases smallpox reported.	Number of houses disinfected.
Birmingham	7,361	31,857	9,927	29	19
Bessemer	3,183	10,979	5,262	78	88
Talladega	754	3,131	2,616	41	12
Other points in Jefferson County	3,453	12,845	7,237	33	25
Total	14,751	58,812	25,042	181	144

From the above it will appear that smallpox is on the increase, but such I do not believe to be the case. The increased number of cases in my opinion is solely due to the fact that the inspectors have discovered many cases that have heretofore been concealed, many of which would never have been discovered but for the thorough examination of each house.

As to the possible duration of the epidemic I can form no opinion that would be of value. Many persons have been vaccinated, but many others have evaded the inspectors. I hope, however, to see considerable improvement in the situation by the middle of February. The mayor of Birmingham, the commissioners of Jefferson County, and officials everywhere, with the exception of Pratt City, have aided and supported me in every way in their power.

Respectfully, yours, G. M. MAGRUDER,
Passed Assistant-Surgeon, U. S. M. H. S.

Smallpox in Pinckard, Ala.

PINCKARD, ALA., *January 23, 1898.*

SIR: We are in the midst of an epidemic of smallpox, and unable to down the disease. Kindly use your influence to have us put under United States quarantine laws. The disease is becoming serious, and I hope that you will lose no time in extending us your assistance.

Hoping to hear from you promptly,

I am, yours, very truly, J. W. HARRIS,
Mayor.

Hon. H. D. CLAYTON, M. C.

Smallpox in Shelby, Ala.

[Telegram.]

COLUMBIANA, ALA., *January 28, 1898.*

One case of smallpox in Shelby, a mining town. Several persons exposed.

D. R. MCMILLAN.

Smallpox decreasing in Washington County, Florida.

JACKSONVILLE, FLA., *January 31, 1898.*

SIR: Supplementing my letter of January 24 wherein I notified your office of the existence of smallpox in Washington County, Fla., permit me to state that at this writing the situation thereat is very much improved. There seems to be very few additional cases, and vaccination is proceeding rapidly and thoroughly. I omitted to state in my former letter that the disease was distinctly traced to the State of Alabama, a fact which I regret not having given prominence to in the said foregoing communication.

Very truly, yours, JOSEPH Y. PORTER,
State Health Officer, Florida.

The above letter was referred to the Supervising Surgeon-General U. S. Marine-Hospital Service, who telegraphed to the passed assistant surgeon in charge of the smallpox epidemic in Alabama, requesting that he visit the locality named and report upon same.